13 October 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Morning Meeting of 13 October 1969

ADD/I reported that an NSC meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. on 15 October to consider U. S. policy in Latin America. At the moment there is no requirement for the Director to brief, but the Director anticipated that he may be asked to brief at the last minute and asked the ADD/I to pursue information on this matter. ADD/I noted that, in response to a request from Dr. Kissinger, they are providing a paper on the scope of Communist subversion in Latin America.

X1 Godfrey briefed [redacted] 25X
that four AN-12's flew [redacted] He commented that 25X
these aircraft may have been used to transport medical equipment.

Godfrey mentioned that some Exercise is causing all CINCs to have a standdown on aircraft. He noted that there will be a meeting today to determine the relevance of such a standdown in connection

X1 with [redacted] 25X
X1 [redacted]

X1 [redacted]
X1

DD/S briefed on a bill before the appropriate Public Works Committee of Congress which would authorize engineering designs in connection with a much expanded BPR facility adjacent to the Headquarters area. In response to the Director's question DD/S noted that the West Parking Lot is utilized by us today through the exercise of a "use permit" only. DD/S noted that he has opened the door with BPR for a full exchange on competing claims and requirements, and the Director asked that the DD/S try to stay on top of the matter.

Carver noted completion of a chart and data displaying the only all-source distillation of order-of-battle in Laos. The Director indicated that he will meet with Carver and others today to discuss this matter.

Carver briefed on the interest of [redacted] office in seeing the study we completed last June on enhancing the intelligence collection program in Vietnam targeted at enemy logistics. He noted that they touched base with Colonel Haig, who was not too happy with our providing this material, but determined that the basic requirement is in connection with a draft letter being prepared for [redacted] to send to the Director and that, based on his and [redacted] exploratory work over the weekend, the draft of the letter will be altered.

X1

Carver noted that he will be meeting with Secretary Laird this afternoon and mentioned a Department of the Army staff report growing out of Secretary Resor's recent visit to Vietnam, which Carver described as being rather critical of PHOENIX.

The Director called Carver's attention to the letter from staff members of the Rand Corporation contained in yesterday's Washington Post. Carver briefed on his acquaintanceship with some of the authors.

Maury called attention to Wallace Carroll's review of Dean Acheson's new book, My Years at the State Department, as contained in the 12 October New York Times Book Review.

Houston recalled that the judge threw out the [redacted] case last June. It has now reappeared, and hearings are set for tomorrow, with some possibility of unfavorable publicity. The Director asked Houston to brief Goodwin.

DD/S&T briefed on our knowledge of the current Soviet space flight. He mentioned that, although no rendezvous or dockings have yet taken place, the objective of the shots is being billed as the establishment of the "first space station."

[redacted]

The Director noted that Herb Klein will be here for lunch today, and in response to his question the DDCI commented that no formal briefing has been set.

L. K. White

Letters to The Editor

A Case Against Staying in Vietnam

Now that the American people are once again debating the issue of Vietnam, we desire to contribute to that discussion by presenting our own views, which reflect both personal judgments and years of professional research on the Vietnam war and related matters. We are expressing here our views as individuals, not speaking for the RAND Corporation, of which we are staff members; there is a considerable diversity of opinion on this subject, as on other issues, among our Rand colleagues.

We believe that the United States should decide now to end its participation in the Vietnam war, completing the total withdrawal of our forces within one year at the most. Such U.S. disengagement should not be conditioned upon agreement or performance by Hanoi or Saigon—i.e., it should not be subject to veto by either side.

It is our view that, apart from persuasive moral arguments that could lead to the same conclusion, there are four objections to continued U.S. efforts in the war:

1. Short of destroying the entire country and its people, we cannot eliminate the enemy forces in Vietnam by military means; in fact "military victory" is no longer the U.S. objective. What should now also be recognized is that the opposing leadership cannot be coerced by the present or by any other available U.S. strategy into making the kinds of concessions currently demanded.

2. Past U.S. promises to the Vietnamese people are not served by prolonging out inconclusive and highly destructive military activity in Vietnam. This activity must not be prolonged merely on demand of the Saigon government, whose capacity to survive on its own must finally be tested, regardless of the outcome.

3. The importance to the U.S. national interest of the future political complexion of South Vietnam has been greatly exaggerated, as has the negative international impact of a unilateral U.S. military withdrawal.

4. Above all, the human, political, and material costs of continuing our part in the war far outweigh any prospective benefits, and are greater than the foreseeable costs and risks of disengagement.

The opponent's morale, leadership, and performance all evidence his continuing resiliency, determination, and effectiveness, even under extremely adverse conditions (in no small part because of his conviction that he fights for a just and vital cause). Estimates that the opponent's will or capacity (in North or South Vietnam) is critically weakening because of internal strains and military pressures are, in our view, erroneous. Even if a new strategy should produce military successes in Vietnam, substantially reduce U.S. costs, and dampen domestic opposition, Hanoi could not be induced to make any concessions (e.g., cease-fire or mutual withdrawals), so long as they implied recognition of the authority of the Saigon government. Thus, to make the end of U.S. involvement contingent upon such concessions is to perpetuate our presence indefinitely.

Our participation in the war will also be unjustifiably prolonged if we tie total withdrawals to basic changes in the policies and character of the South Vietnamese government. The primary interest of the present Saigon leadership is to perpetuate its status and power, and that interest is served not by seeking an end to hostilities through negotiations but only by continuing the war with U.S. support. Their interest is thus directly opposed to ours. For the same reason, the present Saigon government is not likely to seek the long-awaited improvements and "broadening" of its base. The United States should not obstruct favorable political change in Saigon by unconditional support of the present regime. Yet, we believe, the United States should in no way compromise or postpone the goal of total withdrawal by active American involvement in Vietnamese politics. Such interventions in the past have only increased our sense of responsibility for an outcome we cannot control.

Our withdrawal might itself produce the kinds of desirable political changes in Saigon that the U.S. presence seems to have inhibited, including the emergence of a cohesive nationalist consensus; and it might give better focus to our alliance relationships elsewhere in the world by bringing our Vietnam policy into line with the President's declaration in Guam on the limits of our partnerships.

As for global U.S. interests, the original rationale for a large scale U.S. military effort in Vietnam—the prevention of proxy victories by the USSR or Communist China—has long since been discredited. Moreover, we regard the Vietnamese insurgency as having special characteristics that cannot be considered typical of or exerting decisive influence on other revolutionary movements in Asia or elsewhere. We do not predict that only good consequences will follow for Southeast Asia or South Vietnam (or even the United States) from our withdrawal. What we do say is that the risks will not be less after another year or more of American involvement, and the human costs will surely be greater.

DANIEL ELLSBERG,
MELVIN GURTOV,
OLEG HOEFFDING,
ARNOLD L. HORELICK,
KONRAD KELLEN
and PAUL F. LANGER.

Santa Monica, Calif.

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inadequate, and to transform the country into a Jewish state capable of receiving a million or more immigrants would vastly exacerbate the political problem and imperil not only American but all Western interests in the Near East. From Justice Brandeis, whom I revered, and Felix Frankfurter, my intimate friend, I had learned to understand, but not to share, the mystical emotion of the Jews to return to Palestine and end the Diaspora. In urging Zionism as an American Government policy, they had allowed, so I thought, their emotion to obscure the totality of American interest."

Mr. Acheson tells us that Mr. Truman also chose to ignore "the totality of American interest" because he, too, had been converted to Zionism by Eddie Jacobson, his one-time partner in an unsuccessful Kansas City haberdashery. It was this emotional commitment, this compassion for the Jewish people, Mr. Acheson insists, that drove the President to mislead the Arabs and use coercion on the British; it was not, as the British leaders publicly alleged, an unworthy bid for "the Jewish vote."

Whatever the President's motive, Mr. Acheson remains unhappy about the whole performance. This unhappiness is undoubtedly caused in part by the recollection of his own passive role. Only a few months later, while he is still Under Secretary, we see him acting in quite a different way—with a daring assumption of authority—to save Greece and Turkey from Communist pressure. He takes hold of the problem in Secretary Marshall's absence, devises a program that flies in the teeth of the neo-isolationist sentiment in Congress and the country, and then rallies the support of the Congressional leaders after President Truman has failed to sway them.

Certainly he did not play such a passive role in another great drama—the firing of General MacArthur during the Korean War. There still must be a good many Americans who revere MacArthur as something of a demigod, and they will not be charmed by Mr. Acheson's unsparing treatment of their hero.

All of Mr. Acheson's considerable powers as an advocate go into his presentation of the Administration's case against the general. He cites the repeated orders to MacArthur — to fight a limited war within the confines of Korea itself, to keep his American troops behind a fixed line and away from the Chinese frontier, to keep his bombers away from Chinese and Soviet territory, and to refrain from denouncing his orders and criticizing the President in messages to the press and Congress.

He cites the record to show how the general again and again disregarded these orders. Then he recites the unhappy and catastrophic sequence of events: MacArthur's euphoria as his divided forces push toward the forbidden Chinese border, his state of "near panic" as the Chinese smash his army, his hysterical and contradictory messages to Washington, his lamentations that his forces cannot hold any part of Korea followed by demands for authority to extend the war to all of the Chinese mainland.

"It seems impossible to overestimate the damage that General MacArthur's willful insubordination and incredibly bad judgment did to the United States," Mr. Acheson writes. "The general was surely bright enough to understand what his Government wanted him to do. General Ridgway, who succeeded him, understood perfectly and achieved the desired ends *(Continued on Page 26)*

Mr. Acheson Answers Some Questions

Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson responded to some questions related to his book "Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department" in an interview on Sept. 24. The questions were put by Gaddis Smith, a teacher of American diplomatic history at Yale University. Mr. Smith is in the process of completing his own study of Dean Acheson as Secretary of State. The interview took place in Mr. Acheson's office in the law firm of which he is a partner on 16th Street in Washington, one block from the White House.

Smith: Mr. Acheson, five years ago you had no intention of writing this book. You changed your mind in part because you believe the experiences of the past five years "have brought the country, and particularly its young people, to a mood of depression, disillusion, and withdrawal from the effort to affect the world around us." Now you think it important "to tell a tale of large conceptions, great achievements, and some failures." Does this mean you consider "Present at the Creation" a reply to recent "revisionist" accounts of American foreign policy in the years 1945-1953?

Mr. Acheson: No. It is not a reply to anyone. I've simply tried to give a completely accurate and honest account in which everything I say is fully documented. I have gone through, or my most capable research assistants have gone through, tens of thousands of documents in my private papers and, through the courtesy of Secretary Rusk, in the State Department.

Smith: You say in your book that you never thought the word "containment" was an adequate description of American foreign policy under President Truman. Why were you dissatisfied with the word?

Mr. Acheson: It is part of my dissatisfaction with all words. Every description, like a metaphor, is to some degree unsatisfactory. General Marshall once told me that there were two kinds of men: those who dealt with action and those who dealt with description. He was entirely the former. I have been both. As for the word itself, George Kennan used it after the event to describe what was already being done. He has not been entirely happy with the interpretations others have attached to what he wrote.

Smith: When you were in the State Department you were often accused by "the primitives" on the far right of being sympathetic with Communism. In recent years your critics have been predominantly on the left, while many conservative commentators have been lavish in their praise of your ideas. What changes, in men or circumstances, have produced this interesting transformation?

Mr. Acheson: It certainly has occurred. No doubt about that. I would be happy to believe that I have remained the same and that people have finally discovered what I am really like. When I was in public office, I was inevitably the center of controversy. I was loyal to President Truman at a time when Republicans, frustrated at being so long out of office, lashed out wildly like Samson and threatened to bring down the whole temple. Even though I was accused of practically everything from treason to bank robbery, it really had little to do with me personally.

In fact I was always a conservative. I sought to meet the Soviet menace and help create some order out of the chaos of the world. I was seeking stability and never had much use for revolution. As a friend once said, we had plenty of chaos, but not enough to make a world.

Smith: Can one conclude from your book that you think there were no significant differences in the foreign policies pursued by you and by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles?

Mr. Acheson: Yes. What we did when I was in office set the pattern which has been followed more or less up to the present time. Foster's problems stemmed not from policy, but from the way he handled particular situations. He was a psalm-singing Presbyterian Wall Street lawyer. In the Suez crisis, for example, he couldn't have done worse. He ended up *(Continued on Page 30)*

". . . 36 hours in Paris is hardly enough time to be considered an émigré author, Joel . . ."

The Creation

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MacArthur disagreed with the desired ends. . . . he pressed his will and his luck to a shattering defeat."

The fascination of these enduring controversies should not obscure Mr. Acheson's contribution to the bold new departures that set the pattern of American policy for 20 years. Even as an Assistant Secretary in the Hull period, he had a hand in the creation of two of the most useful institutions of the postwar world, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Not only the Truman Doctrine that saved Greece and Turkey from Communist pressures but the Marshall Plan that pulled Western Europe back from the brink of chaos came during his tenure as Under Secretary. Mr. Acheson shows he was the chief architect of the first and one of the major movers of the second.

Then in his years as Secretary came the Point IV program of technical assistance to the less-advanced countries, the complex maneuvers that ended the Soviet blockade of Berlin, the formation of the North Atlantic alliance, the build-up of conventional forces to discourage the Korean-type of attack on Western Europe, the transformation of Germany and Japan from enemy and occupied nations to friends and useful allies. And on the other side of the ledger there was the collapse of China.

In his more relaxed moments Mr. Acheson tells us that Justices Brandeis and Frankfurter, who knew him well, called him a frustrated school teacher. Can this be the explanation of his bittersweet relations with the Congress and the press—his patience and perseverance in bringing to them the new revelations of foreign policy and his exasperation when the dolts among them refused to see how clear it all was?

Professor Acheson's star pupil on Capitol Hill was Sen. Arthur Vandenburg, the reconstructed isolationist from Michigan. At times, the professor is a bit annoyed that this pupil insists on embellishing the lesson with inspirations of his own —the inevitable Vandenburg Amendment. But on the whole he is pleased with the result—Congressional approval of the early United Nations agreements, the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.

On the other hand, Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio, the Republican leader in the Senate, never wins anything better than a dunce cap in Professor Acheson's class.

In the world of diplomacy, we see Professor Acheson trying his arts on that bad boy from Moscow, Andrei Vishinsky. But try as he will, he cannot instill the lesson: that while Vishinsky can't help being a boob, he would get along better if he wasn't such a boor.

The most pampered pupil of all, however, the one with whom the Secretary of State takes endless pains, turns out to be Mohammed Mosadeq, the Iranian Premier who nationalized the British oil holdings. There must be a way to move this fellow, reasons Professor Acheson. He is annoyed with the British students in the class because, in their stupidity, they keep hampering his efforts at enlightenment. And he is rather baffled when time runs out and he has not yet found the argument that will convince the old fanatic that the modern world is no place for a whirling dervish.

Above all these lesser figures on Mr. Acheson's canvas are his personal heroes, General Marshall and President Truman.

"The moment General Marshall entered a room," he writes, "everyone in it felt his presence. It was a striking and communicated force . . . [Yet] there was no military glamor about him and nothing of the martinet . . . All elements of the problem were held, as it were, in solution in his mind until it was ready to precipitate a decision. This is the essence and the method—or rather the art—of judgment in great affairs of state, which requires both mastery of precise information and apprehension of imponderables."

Mr. Acheson reserves his appraisal of Harry S. Truman—six pages of it—for the end. Though he refrains from ranking him among our greatest Presidents, he leaves little doubt that Mr. Truman belongs with the best. The first of his qualities, Mr. Acheson writes, "was one for which he can claim no credit . . . the priceless gift of vitality, the lifestore itself that within certain strains bubbles up through the generations, endowing selected persons with tireless energy." Because the President could and did outwork every one around him, he had "no need for papers predigested into one-page pellets of pablum" (a swipe at Mr. Truman's successor, President Eisenhower).

To this vitality Mr. Truman added two other natural qualities—loyalty and decisiveness. "No one can decide and act who is beset by second thoughts, self-doubt, and that most enfeebling of emotions, regret. With the President, a decision made was done with and he went on to another." His mind was "truly hospitable and generous . . . warm and welcoming in its reception of other people's ideas."

To these qualities of mind

and will, says Mr. Acheson, President Truman brought another major asset: "He had a passion for orderly procedure and a deep, if simple, idea of how to attain it." Though he was no lawyer, he utilized "the law's most fundamental procedure." That is, if there was a difference among his lieutenants, he called them in at the same time, listened to their arguments, made his decision and then immediately confirmed it in writing so that it could not be misunderstood or twisted. Mr. Acheson contrasts these orderly procedures with the slipshod ways of Mr. Truman's predecessor, President Roosevelt, who as a result kept his subordinates in a constant state of tribal warfare.

But the most fascinating character in the whole book is, of course, Mr. Acheson himself. It would make an interesting study — perhaps a disturbing one—to contrast the picture of the man as it emerges from these pages and as the nation now knows him with the widely-accepted portrait painted by his Republican enemies at the time with the help of some members of the Washington press corps. Then he was just a supercilious fancy dan, a bungler at home and abroad, a lackey to the British, a dupe of the Russians if not their deliberate accomplice, and possibly an outright traitor.

Out of these pages, with impressive documentation, emerges a different Acheson—bold in action, persuasive in argument, resourceful in stratagems, tireless in negotiation, quick to sense the direction of a Soviet threat and quick to respond. (His critics of today now say that he "overreacted" to the Russian danger.) Far from genuflecting to the British, he leads Minister Attlee and President Truman into the back room and makes Attlee give up a declaration on atomic weapons that he has slyly wrung from the President. Having taken the measure of Andrei Vishinsky, this other Acheson gleefully rigs the rules of procedure at the Japanese peace conference so that when Vishinsky's successor, Andrei Gromyko, tries the usual obstructive maneuvers, he finds himself hogtied. And to cap everything we find the mark of a really strong man—a sense of humor that enables him (as his contemporary letters show) to stand back and smile at himself even when he is being threatened with impeachment.

"Present at the Creation," then, makes us privy to one of the best-trained and resourceful minds that has ever been put at the service of the nation. In later years, some of President Kennedy's bright young men would refer scornfully to this awesome instrument as "a nineteenth-century mind." Perhaps it is, though not in the sense they intended. For as this book abundantly shows, it is a mind nourished by the classics, deepened by a wide-ranging study of history, mellowed by a lifelong love of good books and good company, a mind sharpened by the law though not narrowed by it, a mind tempered by combat and adversity. Unhappily, it is not the sort of mind that is likely to come out of today's universities with their concern for the "relevant" — that is, the ephemeral.

And so this imposing book leaves us with feelings both of satisfaction and unease. Satisfaction because it is reassuring to know that this not too grateful Republic once had the services of a Dean Acheson. Unease because in all probability we never shall look upon his like again. ■